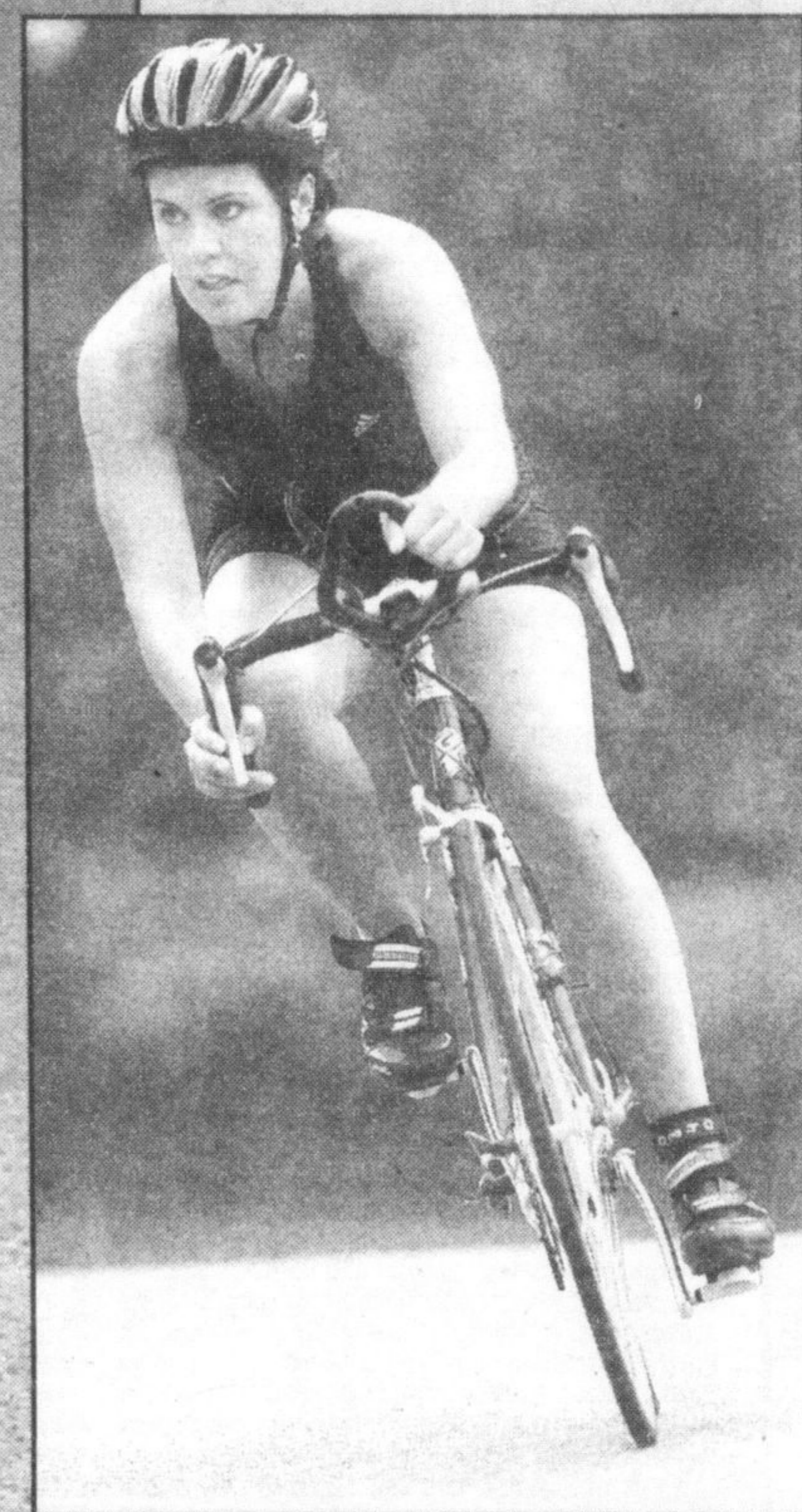


Sports

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Seniors fall short of Ontario 'B' gold

Collapse in final puts damper on Red Sox' strong provincial run

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

The Senior Red Sox couldn't capitalize on a second chance, so they had to settle for second best at last weekend's Ontario 'B' championships in Courtwright.

With provincial gold on the line in a rematch with host Corunna Sunday evening, Milton looked poised to deliver some high-stakes payback and bring its title drive to fruition — taking a 3-0 lead into the second last inning.

That, however, is when the Red Sox received a harsh reminder of just how quickly things can fall apart. A disastrous stretch of shaky pitching and three errors opened the door to a nine-run uprising for the hometown favourites — who'd silence

Milton the rest of the way for their fifth consecutive comeback win of the weekend.

"I think our youth showed through in the end," said manager George Moore. "It's pretty heart-breaking. What can I say, we just imploded."

The Red Sox struggled against seasoned south-paws in tournament play all season long and did so once again in the finals, with a Corunna lefty shutting them down from the fourth inning on.

"The problem is we don't see many good left handers in our league, and that hurts us," Moore explained.

Milton's first clash with the eventual champs featured a rash of missed opportunities, as a dozen runners were left on base — including 10 in scoring position — in a 5-4 defeat Saturday morning.

The Red Sox had the bases loaded with just one out in both the sixth and seventh, but just couldn't cap their rallies.

As tough as these two Corunna losses were, the silver medalists took at least some solace in improving on last year's 1-2 record at the double-knockout tournament and staving off elimination three straight times after the initial setback.

The biggest of these three do-or-die wins was a

4-0 whitewash of London's Lakeside — who had been a thorn in Milton's side for the past three seasons.

Adam Ahearn delivered a complete-game three-hit gem for the shutout, while reliable slugger Pat Mastro highlighted the offensive side of things with a bases-clearing triple in the second. Weekend standout Jeff MacLeod contributed a pair of hits and went 13-21 overall.

From there, the Red Sox outdistanced Ivey 10-6 — thanks to some solid relief work by Mike Grabauskas and Nathan Tami, plus key hitting by MacLeod, Kevin Comisky and Reese Davies.

Milton would then book passage to the finals with another potent performance — toppling Amherstberg 9-5. A well-balanced attack complemented a rock-solid effort by Ian Zettle, who picked up his second win of the weekend.

He also turned back Kendall 6-2 last Friday evening, giving up seven hits and enjoying plate pop from Davies, MacLeod and Todd Devlin.

"The guys were pretty inconsolable after coming so close in the finals, but we really did have a great run," said Moore, whose team went 26-21 overall this year.

On the move

A couple of competitors tackle the cycling portion of the 10th annual Women's Triathlon Milton, which drew roughly 650 racers to Kelso Conservation Area Sunday morning. Elissa Whitman was the top overall local finisher, placing eighth in the duathlon with a time of 44:57. Fellow Miltonians Lisa Brown and Kim Vivian were close behind in 13th and 14th respectively. Nancy Cole-Hryciw was the top local finisher in the sprint triathlon — clocking in at 1:23.17 for 18th spot — while Suzanne Lapos was the top local finisher in the Try-A-Tri, placing 19th with a 45:06 performance.

Photos by
BARRIE ERSKINE

Ontario's new free vaccines will protect kids

The government of Ontario is helping kids stay safe from **chicken pox** and **meningococcal meningitis**, and helping families by adding these free vaccinations to the routine immunization schedule. Here's how it works:

- Vaccines for chicken pox and meningococcal meningitis are now available for one-year-old children in Ontario born on or after September 1, 2003.
- Starting in January 2005, 5-year-olds who haven't had chicken pox can also get the vaccine, as well as high-risk people of any age.
- Also starting in January 2005, 12-year-olds, 15- to 19-year-olds and high-risk people of any age will be eligible for free meningococcal meningitis vaccinations.

For more information, talk to your doctor or local public health unit. Call 1-877-234-4343. TTY 1-800-387-5559. Or visit HealthyOntario.com.

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